

Roaring to old heights

New coach, new attitude help Lions turn heads and restore winning ways

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

The 2011 Borah football season didn't finish liked first-year coach Darren Corpus had hoped. But most everyone had to agree that a lot was accomplished and the future looked far brighter than it had in a long time.

"I definitely feel we deserved to be in the state playoffs," said Corpus. "We were in the top eight teams) or higher than that. So, from that standpoint, it was a total success."

Led by the amazing abilities shown by his son, Braden, the Lions finished with a 5-4 record. Once a school with a great football tradition, the Lions enjoyed their winning season in 17 years. They did it with an impressive offensive attack headed by the younger Corpus, a senior, a corps of talented players and a belief in the older Corpus that good things would happen.

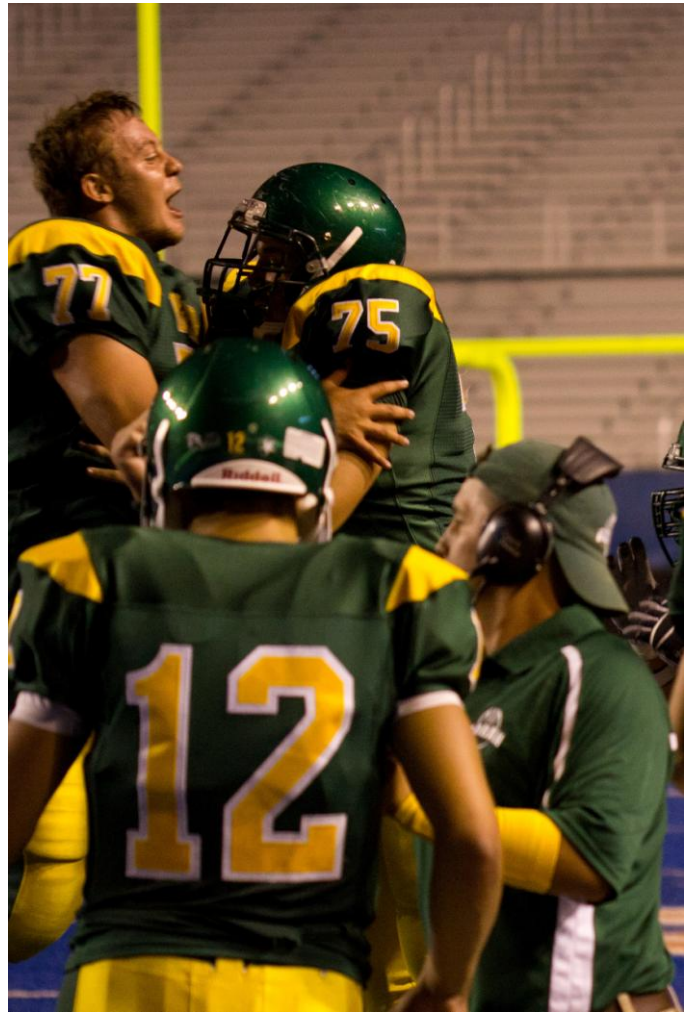
"Hopefully, it's not a one-shot wonder ... and I don't think it will be," he said. "I think we're on our way."

Corpus joined the Borah staff last spring and the hiring immediately inspired the players, many of whom had played for him at West Junior High. The Lions started the season with consecutive wins over Rocky Mountain and Centennial, which drew a lot of attention.

If not for a questionable official's call near the end of the game at Meridian and a narrow 38-34 loss to rival Capital, the school's comeback might have felt complete.

2011 results (5-4)

Opponent	W/L	Score
ROCKY MTN.	W	41-28
CENTENNIAL	W	27-20
at Meridian	L	36-41
BOISE	W	43-7
at Mtn. View	L	14-38
at Timberline	W	28-14
EAGLE	L	6-24
at Vallivue	W	42-20
at Capital	L	34-38



Konnor Moden (No. 77) and **Mason Bilger** celebrate a big play during Borah's homecoming victory over rival Boise.

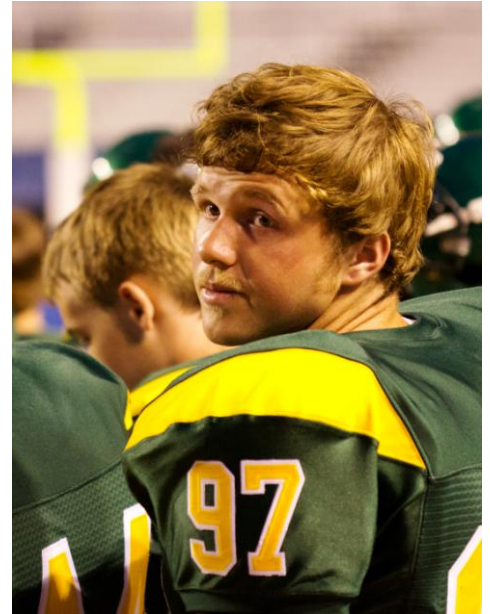
"Yes, that's true," said coach Corpus. "No loss is a good loss, but if there's something we can take away from this is that the kids will work harder to prepare for next year."

That preparatory work will be without Braden Corpus. After a season-ending injury to running back Ryan Emry before the start of the season put a damper on the Lions' hopes, Corpus took over the team's offense. He passed for 1,901 yards and ran for 913 more, meaning he accounted for over 80 percent of the team's offense.

Corpus showed speed, quickness, agility and a deft passing arm. He completed almost 56 percent of his passes. Even more impressive? He threw 16 touchdowns passes and did not have an interception all season.

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“It’s a stat I don’t think I’ve ever witnessed before,” said coach Corpus. “I’m sure it’s a school record, but it’s never been kept. It’s a great accomplishment, though. No doubt about it.”

You would think a statistic like that should draw college scouts from all over. However, because the 5A SIC was loaded with good quarterbacks this season, Corpus’ feats were somewhat overlooked and he’s tabbed as a potential linebacker or defensive back at the college level.

“He was definitely our home-run hitter,” said coach Corpus. “Ryan was going to be that guy and he and Hunter (Kenyon) would have made a great 1-2 punch. Just think what we could have done with them?”

“When we lost Ryan, we needed someone to step up. If not for Ryan’s injury, he (Braden) probably wouldn’t have run it so much. But he came through when we needed him.”

Borah’s passing statistics were helped by the receiving feats of guys like 6-foot-4 Cody McKague and 6-6 Ben Tucakovic, Tyler Higby, Hayden Powell and Kion Williams. For the first time in years, the Lions seemed able to score from anywhere on the field.

The defense was led by Grant Darrington, Tyler Loyd and Carlton Strough and they had their great moments, but also gave up 23.0 points per game. Part of the reason was fatigue. Borah came in undersized and somewhat outmanned, but also had to endure times when the offense scored so quickly that there was little time to rest.

“You can get lucky once in a while, but when you’re going against guys a lot heavier, it’s tough to stop that,” coach Corpus said “We wanted to not allow the huge runs. We wanted to play with (the opponent), get a stop here and there, maybe create a turnover, and then let our offense go with it.”

Coach Corpus said the primary plan for next year is to increase the size of the defensive line and linebackers. The junior varsity squad had a 7-2 season and there appears to be plenty of talent. They will be the ones who help determine if this year’s 2011 was an anomaly ...

Or a sign that Borah football is back.



TOP LEFT: QB Braden Corpus listens to a coach’s comments.

TOP MIDDLE: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

TOP RIGHT: Kendrick Hull

MIDDLE RIGHT: A Borah fan shows off the team’s slogan.

Borah’s team awards

Awards handed out at the Borah football banquet Nov. 16:

- MVP – Braden Corpus**
- Mr. Offense - Braden Corpus**
- Outstanding OL – Chandler Kingsbury**
- Outstanding RB – Hunter Kenyon**
- Outstanding WR – Cody McKague**
- Coaches Award – Dale Derosset**
- Mr. Defense – Grand Darrington**
- Outstanding DL – Tyler Loyd**
- Outstanding LB – Carlton Strough**
- Outstanding DB – Tyler Higby**
- Most Improved – Ben Tucakovich**
- Scout Team POY – Tyer Loyd**
- Most Inspirational – Derrick Dooms**